

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
December 21, 2017

Members Present: Scottie Ard and Ron Volkert

Members Absent: Jim Jackson

Others Present: Craig Yehlik and Lori Brinkman

Scottie Ard called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Ron Volkert moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Scottie Ard and carried.

Scottie Ard moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting of September 19, 2017, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

K-9 Update

Police Chief Craig Yehlik gave an update on the K-9 dog and handler; he stated they are doing well and are working with a St. Paul handler once a week. Chief Yehlik mentioned that St. Croix County Officer Josh Stenseth has been a big help during this process. The official K-9 training will begin in March with graduation taking place the last Thursday in May at the St. Paul Police Department K-9 facility. The public is welcome to attend. Scottie Ard suggests a press release prior to the graduation.

K-9 Memorandum of Agreement

Chief Yehlik explained labor issues that arise from having a K-9 including time worked by the handler outside normally scheduled work hours. There are federal standards for paying the K-9 handler for dog maintenance and care on off-duty days. The K-9 handler and Lieutenant Veronica Koehler have been working on a draft Memorandum of Agreement that has been reviewed and approved by the Union. The document was then reviewed by New Richmond Labor Attorney Steve Zack. Chief Yehlik explained an addendum to the current contract. The revised Memorandum of Agreement was presented to the Public Safety Committee. Much discussion followed. Scottie Ard voiced her concern about only paying the K-9 handler for 30 minutes of dog care per day. Chief Yehlik explained the K-9 handler will take the K-9 vehicle to and from work which is used as additional compensation. Scottie suggested revisiting the dog care time after six months to see if it's adequate. There was discussion about the K-9's end of service life. Chief Yehlik will research other agencies end of life costs/procedures/policies and will bring his findings back to a future meeting.

Scottie Ard made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

K-9 Draft Policy

Chief Yehlik explained the agency is working on the draft K-9 policy. They have been working with other area jurisdictions and with the policy company Lexipol. The Public Safety Committee reviewed and discussed the draft K-9 policy. Chief Yehlik would like the K-9 kept for City calls only. He said the K-9 handler and K-9 will assist other agencies in life or death situations only. Scottie would like to see language added to the policy for outside agency requests. Craig will look into possible training from Lexipol for the K-9 handler.

Scottie Ard made a motion to accept the draft policy and submit it to Lexipol for final review, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Review of Pursuit Policy

Chief Yehlik explained the New Richmond Police Department has a pursuit policy in place and the State requires the policy be reviewed at least once every two years. Chief Yehlik requested a change to paragraph 308.8.1 – **WHEN USE IS AUTHORIZED** as follows: Remove the “Use of pursuit intervention tactics should be employed only after approval of a Department Supervisor,” and replace it with “When time permits, Officers should seek Supervisor approval prior to the use of pursuit intervention tactics.”

Scottie Ard made a motion to approve the wording change in paragraph 308.8.1 as outlined above, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Scottie Ard made a motion to approve the full Pursuit Policy, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Labor Dispute Policy

Chief Yehlik stated the New Richmond Police Department is reviewing all policies to make sure they apply to how the Police Department currently operates. Chief Yehlik asked the Committee if they want to see all policies or only ones they are recommending changes for. Scottie Ard suggested the Committee view any language changes that directly affect officers in the field. She further suggested listing policies as consent agenda items at City Council meetings, unless there are suggested language changes (similar to above).

HR218 Ordinance Review

Chief Yehlik stated the New Richmond Police Department continues to work on the HR218 Ordinance to define the “member in good standing” phrase. Attorney Nick Vivian is in the process of writing a proposed ordinance for the Committee to review.

Scottie Ard made a motion to table the discussion on HR218 until the Committee receives the ordinance from Nick Vivian, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Communication/Miscellaneous

Scottie Ard mentioned a minor wording change in the Preparation for Deployment section of the K-9 Policy: under item (e), change the “in” to “if”.

In light of the recent student deaths in the New Richmond School District, Chief Yehlik found a group called “Rise Together” that works with anger/sadness issues that arise from these situations. He will look into bringing the group to New Richmond for a presentation.

Chief Yehlik mentioned a possible future K-9 fundraising event after visiting the Bentleyville light show in Duluth having to do with a Naughty & Nice list. This could be incorporated into the holiday parade/events. Chief Yehlik suggested it to Rob at the Chamber of Commerce who liked the idea.

Scottie Ard moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Minutes by Lori Brinkman